GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:321
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2005
CONNECTING EASTERN AND WESTERN COAST
Jogi Shri Ajit

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to formulate any scheme to connect the Eastern Coast and Western Coast of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the benefits likely to accrue as a result thereof; and

(d) the total amount likely to be spent by the Government thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 321 TO BE ANSWERED ON 17TH AUGUST, 2005 RAISED BY SHRI AJIT JOGI REGARDING `CONNECTING EASTERN AND WESTERN COAST`.

(a) & (b) The Government is implementing Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project, which envisages cutting of a ship channel to connect the Gulf of Mannar and Bay of Bengal through Palk Bay and Palk Strait so that most of the ships, depending on draft required, moving between the east and the west coast of India, could have a continuous navigable sea route around the Peninsula within India`s own territorial waters.

(c) Once complete, the benefits, which are likely to accrue after implementation of the project are as under : # The channel will save upto 424 nautical miles of navigable distance and upto 30 hours of sailing time for ships sailing between the east and the west coast of the country leading to reduction in maritime transportation cost and thereby promoting coastal movement of domestic cargo. # Development of ports on the coast along the channel may spur economic and industrial development in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu. # The project is of strategic importance from national defence and security point of view, enabling quicker access between the coasts as well as shortened response time for Naval and Coast Guard ships.

(d) The sanctioned cost of the project is Rs.2427.40 crores.